

GUNNISON GORGE NCA

FAQ

What is a National Conservation Area (NCA)?

NCA is a designation given to special lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) under the **National Landscape Conservation System**. Congress designates an NCA in order to permanently protect and conserve identified resource values of national interest. Currently there are thirteen NCAs in the nation (including the newly designated Dominguez-Escalante NCA), and each is managed in accordance with special provisions detailed in the designating legislation.

Where is the Gunnison Gorge NCA?

The Gunnison Gorge NCA is located about seven miles northeast of Montrose in west central Colorado, just downstream from the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. It encompasses approximately 57,725 acres of public lands in Montrose and Delta counties.

- **Gunnison Gorge NCA Boundary Map**
- **Gunnison Gorge River Map**

How is the NCA managed?

Congress required the BLM to prepare a resource management plan for the NCA within four years from the date the authorizing legislation was signed. The **Gunnison Gorge NCA Resource Management Plan (9MB)** was approved in 2004.

Was the public able to participate in the preparation of the Resource Management Plan?

Yes, the public was invited to participate. Public planning opportunities were announced via this website, as well as state and local media outlets. In addition, the BLM invited other federal, state, and local government entities and a variety of non-governmental organizations to participate in the planning process.

What types of use are allowed in the Gunnison Gorge NCA?

The NCA encompasses a diverse landscape ranging from adobe badlands to rugged pinon-juniper covered slopes to the spectacular double canyon of the Gunnison Gorge Wilderness Area. This landscape supports an equally diverse range of uses--activities such as wilderness whitewater boating and Gold Medal trout fishing in the Gunnison River, big-game hunting for mule deer and elk, off-highway vehicle use in Peach Valley, domestic sheep and livestock grazing, sightseeing, wildlife photography, and wilderness hiking and backpacking.

What types of use are NOT allowed in the Gunnison Gorge NCA?

Subject to valid existing rights, the NCA is "withdrawn from all forms of entry, appropriation or disposal under the public land laws; from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and from disposition under all laws relating to mineral and geothermal leasing, and all amendments thereto." This means that, except where they currently exist, the following uses/activities are not allowed within the NCA:

- Location, exploration, development and patent of mining claims
- Sand and gravel extraction activities
- Oil and gas or geothermal leasing, exploration and development
- Sale or lease of public lands for any purpose